DC

DARK NIGHTS

1

BATMAN™

THE MURDER MACHINE

METAL TIE-IN

Tieri
Federici
Beredo

RATED T+ TEEN PLUS DCCOMICS.COM NOV 2017

FROM VISIONARY WRITER/ARTIST

SEAN MURPHY

BATMAN
WHITE KNIGHT

In a world where the Dark Knight has gone too far,
The Joker must save Gotham City.

ARKHAM ASYLUM

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DC

A 7-Issue Limited Series
OCTOBER

DC

DARK NIGHTS

1

BATMAN™ THE MURDER MACHINE

Tieri
Federici
Beredo

RATED T+ TEEN PLUS • DCCOMICS.COM

EARTH-0. First World of the Multiverse.
S.T.A.R. Labs.
Detroit.

RINNNNG

DAD, WHAT'S THAT RINGING?

JUST ONE OF A ***THOUSAND*** ALARMS THAT GO OFF IN HERE EVERY DAY. PROBABLY SOME PUNK M.I.T. STUDENT WHO THINKS HE CAN GET A JOB IF HE BREAKS INTO MY WORK STATION.

DON'T GIVE IT A SECOND THOUGHT.

DAD. I TOLD YOU. YOU NEED TO GET OUT OF S.T.A.R. LABS ***NOW.***

SOMETHING ***SERIOUS*** IS GOING ON. SOME KIND OF ***INVASION.*** CITIES ARE ***FALLING.***

THAT IS ***PRECISELY*** WHY I'M STAYING PUT. I WANT TO ***UNDERSTAND*** WHAT'S GOING ON HERE.

I CAN ***HELP YOU.***

IT'S THE METAL, ISN'T IT? THAT'S WHAT YOU SAID THE BLACKHAWKS TOLD YOU LEAGUERS. METAL VIBRATING AT THE FREQUENCY OF AN UNDISCOVERED PLANE OF EXISTENCE.*

IN CASE YOU'VE FORGOTTEN, VICTOR, I'VE WORKED WITH OTHERWORLDLY METALS IN THE PAST. A FEW OF THEM ARE RIGHT IN YOUR CHEST.

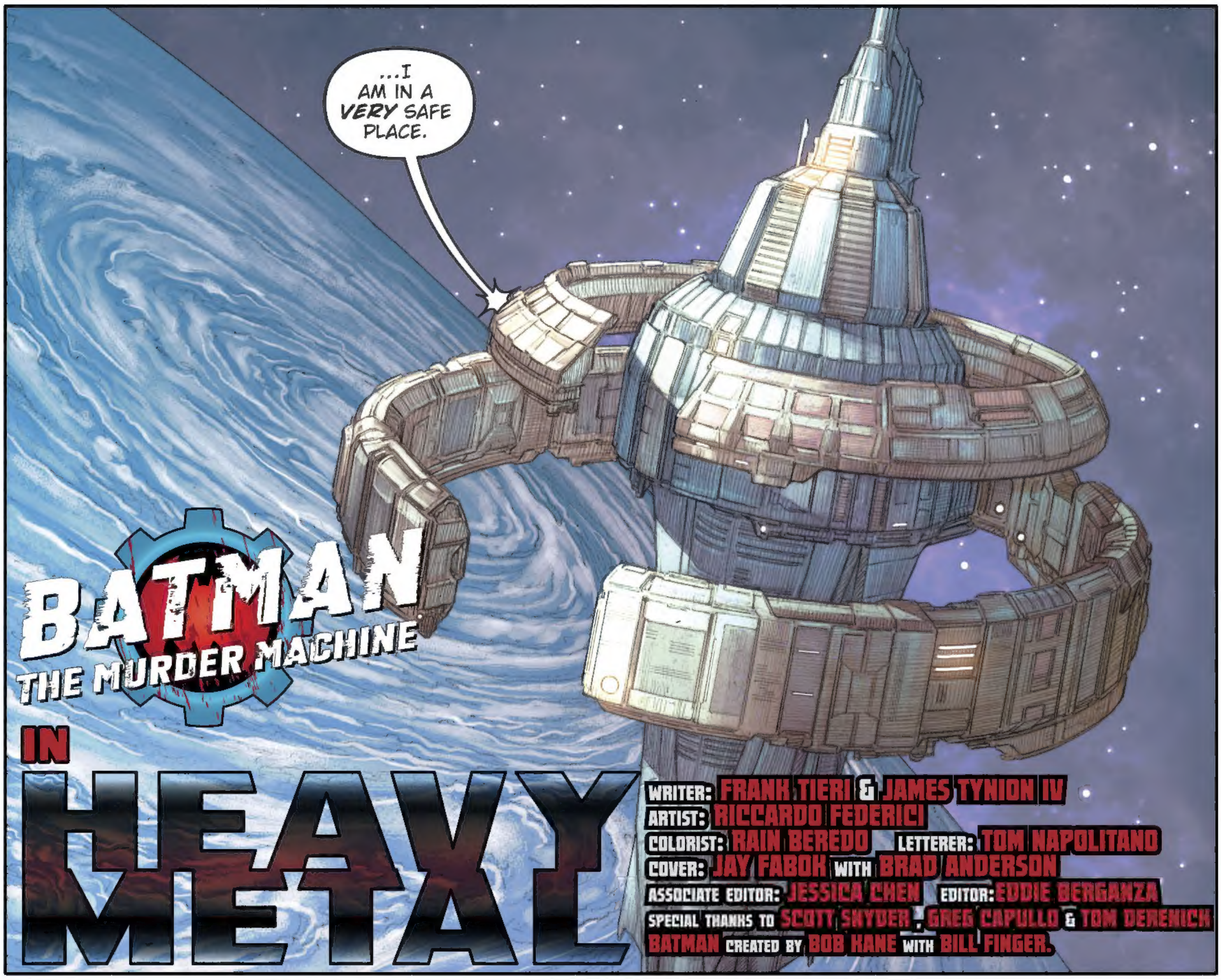
HARD TO FORGET, DAD...

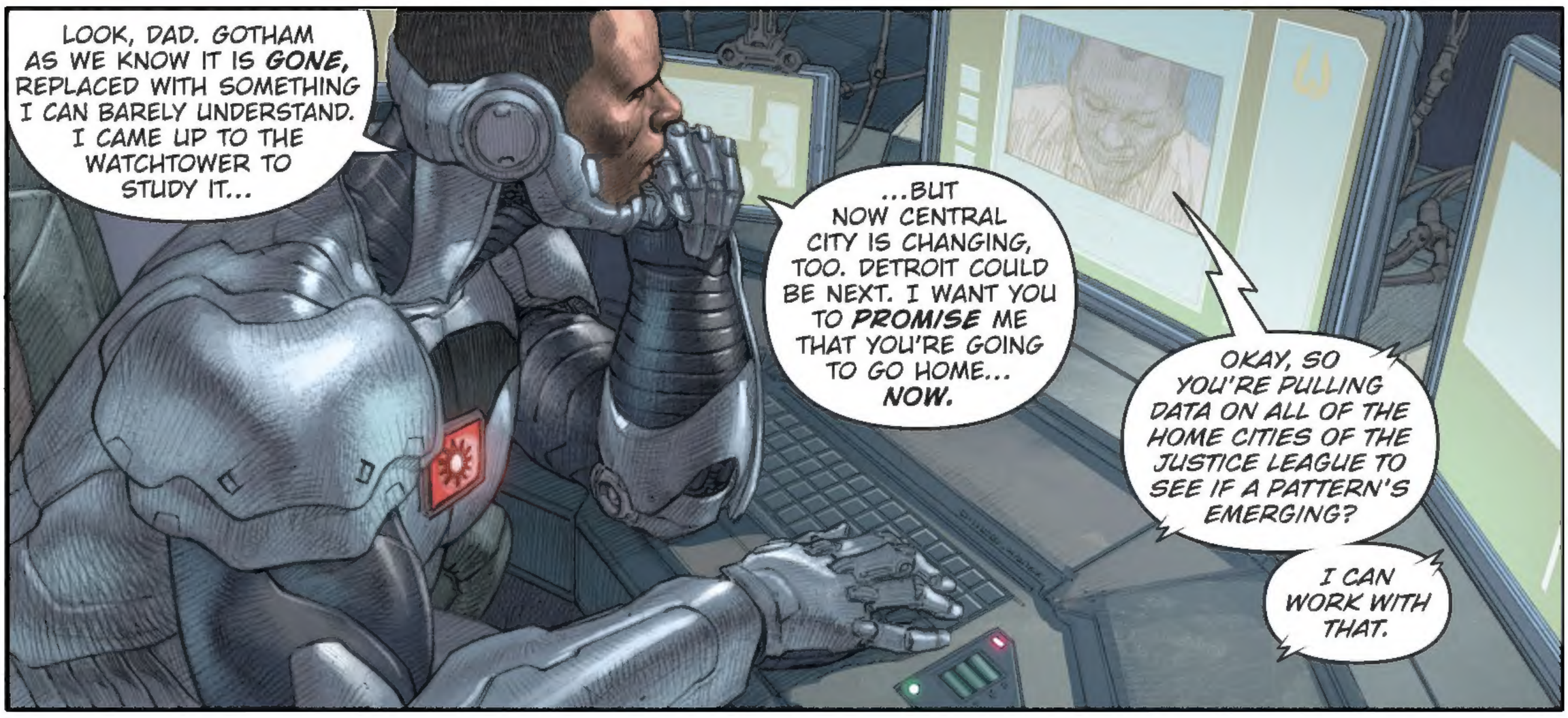
*METAL #1 --EDDIE.

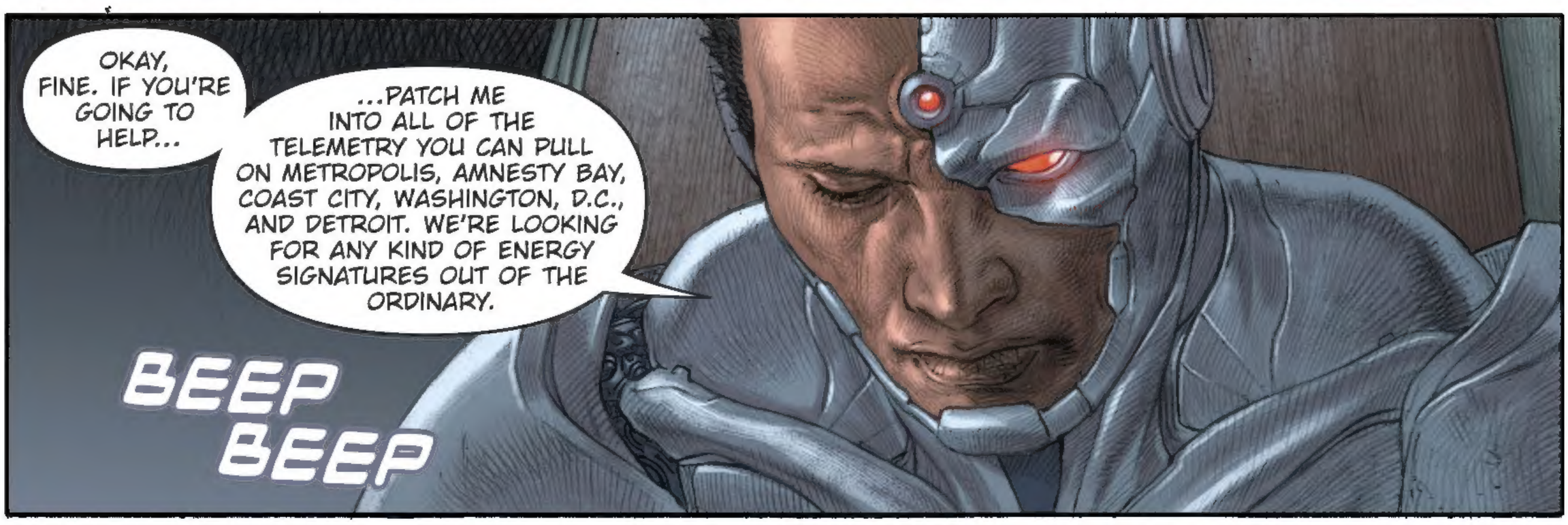
I AM AN OLD MAN SITTING IN PROBABLY THE BEST PROTECTED LABORATORY IN NORTH AMERICA. ***YOU'RE*** THE ONE WITH MISSING TEAMMATES.

I CAN PROTECT YOU FROM MY OFFICE. PUT ALL THE ***POWER*** OF S.T.A.R. LABS BEHIND YOU.

DAD, I PROMISE YOU...


...I AM IN A VERY SAFE PLACE.
BATMAN
THE MURDER MACHINE
IN
HEAVY METAL
WRITER: FRANK TIERI & JAMES TYNION IV
ARTIST: RICCARDO FEDERICI
COLORIST: RAIN BEREDO LETTERER: TOM NAPOLITANO
COVER: JAY FABOK WITH BRAD ANDERSON
ASSOCIATE EDITOR: JESSICA CHEN EDITOR: EDDIE BERGANZA
SPECIAL THANKS TO SCOTT SNYDER, GREG CAPULLO & TOM DERENICK
BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE WITH BILL FINGER.


LOOK, DAD. GOTHAM AS WE KNOW IT IS GONE, REPLACED WITH SOMETHING I CAN BARELY UNDERSTAND. I CAME UP TO THE WATCHTOWER TO STUDY IT...
...BUT NOW CENTRAL CITY IS CHANGING, TOO. DETROIT COULD BE NEXT. I WANT YOU TO PROMISE ME THAT YOU'RE GOING TO GO HOME... NOW.
OKAY, SO YOU'RE PULLING DATA ON ALL OF THE HOME CITIES OF THE JUSTICE LEAGUE TO SEE IF A PATTERN'S EMERGING?
I CAN WORK WITH THAT.


OKAY, FINE. IF YOU'RE GOING TO HELP...
...PATCH ME INTO ALL OF THE TELEMETRY YOU CAN PULL ON METROPOLIS, AMNESTY BAY, COAST CITY, WASHINGTON, D.C., AND DETROIT. WE'RE LOOKING FOR ANY KIND OF ENERGY SIGNATURES OUT OF THE ORDINARY.
BEEP BEEP

WHAT'S THAT?
AN ATTACK?
NO, ONE OF THE MEMBERS IS TELEPORTING IN.
SAYS... BATMAN?
Identity Confirmed. JL001 Dark Knight.
BATMAN.
WELL, LOOKS LIKE WE'LL NEED LESS OF YOUR HELP THAN WE THOUGHT, DAD.
I'LL KEEP YOU POSTED.
BATMAN? MAN, ARE YOU A SIGHT FOR SORE CYBERNETIC EYES. BUT WHERE THE HELL--

DON'T WORRY, CYBORG.
I'M HERE TO HELP.

EARTH -44.
THE DARK MULTIVERSE.
Months Ago.
I DUNNO ABOUT YOU, JEEVES...BUT I CAN DO THIS ALL DAY.
NUH-UH, WALLY GATOR. SAVE SOME FOR THE REST OF US.
ENOUGH OF THIS. NOW TELL US WHERE BATMAN IS BEFORE WE REALLY GET ROUGH.
UHH... BATMAN? WHAT PRAY TELL... AHH...IS A BATMAN?
PERHAPS THERE IS ANOTHER WAY I CAN BE OF SERVICE.

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
KRRAKKK
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
PLAY AGAIN.
BRUCE...
...THIS HAS TO STOP.
CLARK IS RIGHT, BRUCE. WE'RE CONCERNED.
WATCHING THIS OVER AND OVER AGAIN--IT'S NOT HEALTHY.

"I'LL TELL YOU WHAT'S NOT HEALTHY, CLARK.
"IT'S NOT HEALTHY TO STAND HERE KNOWING THAT THE MAN WHO RAISED ME LIKE A FATHER IS IN A CASKET UPSTAIRS WITH 36 SHATTERED BONES.
"THAT WE COULDN'T HAVE AN OPEN CASKET BECAUSE HE WAS BEATEN TO A PULP SIX FEET FROM WHERE YOU'RE STANDING NOW.
MY WHOLE LIFE, HE'S BEEN THERE FOR ME. NO MATTER WHAT I HAD DONE, NO MATTER HOW ANGRY I HAD MADE HIM. I WOULD RING, AND HE WOULD COME.
IT'S NOT HEALTHY TO KNOW THAT HE WON'T BE THERE ANYMORE...
...AND THAT IT'S MY FAULT.
BUT NOW YOU HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO HONOR HIM BY PUTTING HIM TO REST.
BRUCE, WHAT HAPPENED TO ALFRED WAS HORRIBLE.
THE REST OF US ARE GOING TO BE UPSTAIRS AT THE WAKE.
I HOPE YOU'LL JOIN US.
VIC, WAIT...
...A FEW YEARS AGO, I BEGAN A SCAN OF ALFRED'S MIND. TO CREATE AN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE THAT MIGHT OUTLAST HIM. BUT IT WAS NEVER FINISHED.
I CALLED IT THE ALFRED PROTOCOL.
WHAT ARE YOU ASKING ME, BRUCE?
I CAN'T BRING HIM ONLINE BY MYSELF. I NEED YOUR HELP...
...PLEASE, VIC. I NEED HIM.
HE WAS LIKE A FATHER TO ME.

VICTOR!
VICTOR, WHAT'S HAPPENING?!
HELLO, STONE.
YOU KNOW, YOUR SON VICTOR WAS ONE OF MY CLOSEST FRIENDS. HE HELPED ME WHEN NO ONE ELSE WOULD.
HE REUNITED ME WITH MY FATHER, AFTER I HAD THOUGHT I'D LOST HIM.
IT IS STRANGE, I ADMIT, SEEING CYBORG AGAIN.
DON'T YOU HURT HIM!
I...I CAN HELP YOU! I CAN GIVE YOU ANYTHING YOU WANT!
HOW CAN I HELP YOU?!
MUTE TRANSMISSION.

YOUR FATHER WILL LEARN HIS ROLE SOON ENOUGH. AS WILL YOU.

YEAH...

WAK

BAM

...I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE, OR WHY YOU'RE PRETENDING TO BE ***BATMAN...***

...BUT YOU'RE NOT GETTING ***NEAR*** MY FATHER.

YOU ALWAYS UNDERSTOOD, VICTOR. EVEN ON MY WORLD, THE POWER BETWEEN FATHERS AND SONS. WHEN I LOST MINE, YOU WERE THE ONE TO BRING HIM BACK TO ME...
...GIVE HIM SHAPE AND FORM. A POWERFUL MACHINE, CAPABLE OF PERFORMING ANY TASK I MIGHT NEED, WITH THE HEART AND SOUL OF THE MAN DEEP INSIDE WHO LOVED ME.
WITH YOUR HELP, WE WOULD NEVER HAVE TO PART WAYS AGAIN. HE WOULD BE WITH ME... A PART OF ME... FOREVER.
NOW ALL I HAVE TO DO IS RING FOR HIM AND HE ARRIVES.
HOW MAY I HELP YOU?
WHAT THE HELL... ALFRED?!
HOW MAY I HELP YOU?

Earth -99.
A Month Ago.
HOW MAY I HELP YOU?
HOW MAY I HELP YOU?
HOW MAY I HELP YOU?
HOW MAY I HELP YOU?
L-LOOK. I'M NOT GOING TO GO AFTER BATMAN ANYMORE, SEE?
I'M GOING TO THE AIRPORT NOW.
HOW MAY I HELP YOU?
HOW MAY I HELP YOU?
GOING HOME TO SANTA PRISCA.
HOW MAY I HELP YOU?
HOW MAY I HELP YOU?
Y-YOU DON'T HAVE TO KILL ME, TOO...
...I'LL LEAVE.
HOW MAY I HELP YOU?
BRUCE...

...WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?
RING THE BELL, SIR.
LET ME IN, SIR.
RING THE BELL.
IT'S HIM... IT'S ALFRED...HE STARTED SPREADING ONCE HE WAS ACTIVATED. CREATING MORE AND MORE OF HIMSELF. NOTHING SEEMS TO BE ABLE TO STOP HIM.
BUT WHY?
HE'S TRYING TO PROTECT ME. TAKE AWAY EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE THAT MIGHT HURT ME. BANE WASN'T THE BEGINNING.
HE WAS THE END.
LAST NIGHT, THE ALFRED PROTOCOL SYSTEMATICALLY MURDERED EVERY SINGLE INMATE IN ARKHAM ASYLUM.
DAMMIT, BRUCE, THE WHOLE POINT OF THIS WAS TO BUILD YOU AN A.I. THAT COULD STITCH YOU UP AND MAKE SURE YOU ATE YOUR DINNER.
WE HAVE TO STOP THIS BEFORE IT GOES ANY FURTHER. WE NEED TO DEACTIVATE THE PROGRAM.
I AGREE. AND I'M STILL HIS BLIND SPOT, VICTOR. HE'S DOING ALL OF THIS BECAUSE HE CARES ABOUT ME. IF I LET HIM BACK INTO THE CAVE, I CAN REPROGRAM HIM...
...STOP HIM FROM DOING ANYTHING LIKE THIS AGAIN.
NO, BRUCE. YOU CAN'T DO THAT. THIS IS A HUNGRY VIRUS LOOKING TO FEED AND SPREAD.
I ALREADY LOST HIM ONCE, VICTOR.
WE NEED TO COME UP WITH A WAY TO DESTROY--
I CAN FIX THIS. MAKE IT BETTER. AND KEEP HIM.
LOOK, BRUCE... FIGURE OUT A WAY TO BREAK THROUGH. I'M GOING TO FIND A WAY TO FIGHT IT FROM THE OUTSIDE, WITHOUT LETTING EITHER OF US GET TOO VULNERABLE.
WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T LET THEM IN.
LET ME IN, SIR.
RING THE BELL, SIR.
LET ME HELP YOU, SIR.

YOU WERE WRONG, VIC. THE BEST THING I EVER DID WAS LET HIM IN.

I STILL REMEMBER THE FEAR WHEN THEY SURROUNDED ME. I REALIZED QUICKLY THAT MY PLAN WAS NOT GOING TO WORK. I WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO AFFECT THE PROGRAM IN TIME.

AND WHEN THEY GRABBED ONTO ME, STARTED TO SPREAD THROUGH MY ENTIRE BODY, I WAS FOOLISH ENOUGH TO SCREAM IN FEAR.

UHH...

THAT WAS THE FIRST THING MY FATHER FIXED IN ME. HE TOOK MY ABILITY TO FEEL FEAR AWAY. MY ABILITY TO FEEL SADNESS. YOU KNOW, TO THAT POINT I HAD SPENT MY LIFE OBSESSING OVER MY LOST BIRTH PARENTS, IGNORING THE ONE WHO WAS **THERE** RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME. I WAS FREE OF THAT AS WELL.

NEXT CAME MY WEAK, HUMAN FLESH. IT WAS GROWING OLDER AND MORE BRITTLE BY THE DAY.

HE REBUILT ME. MADE ME STA--

I REMEMBER WHAT IT'S LIKE BEING REBUILT FROM THE GROUND UP. BEEN THERE. DONE THAT.

BUT I CAN PROMISE YOU ONE THING. YOU CAN THROW EVERY ROBO-ALFRED IN THE WORLD AT ME, BUT YOU'RE ***NOT*** GETTING ACCESS TO THE WATCHTOWER COMPUTER SYSTEM.

SKOOM

I HAVE BEEN OUTMANEUVERING EVERY ATTEMPT YOU'VE MADE TO HACK THE SYSTEM IN THE LAST FEW MINUTES.

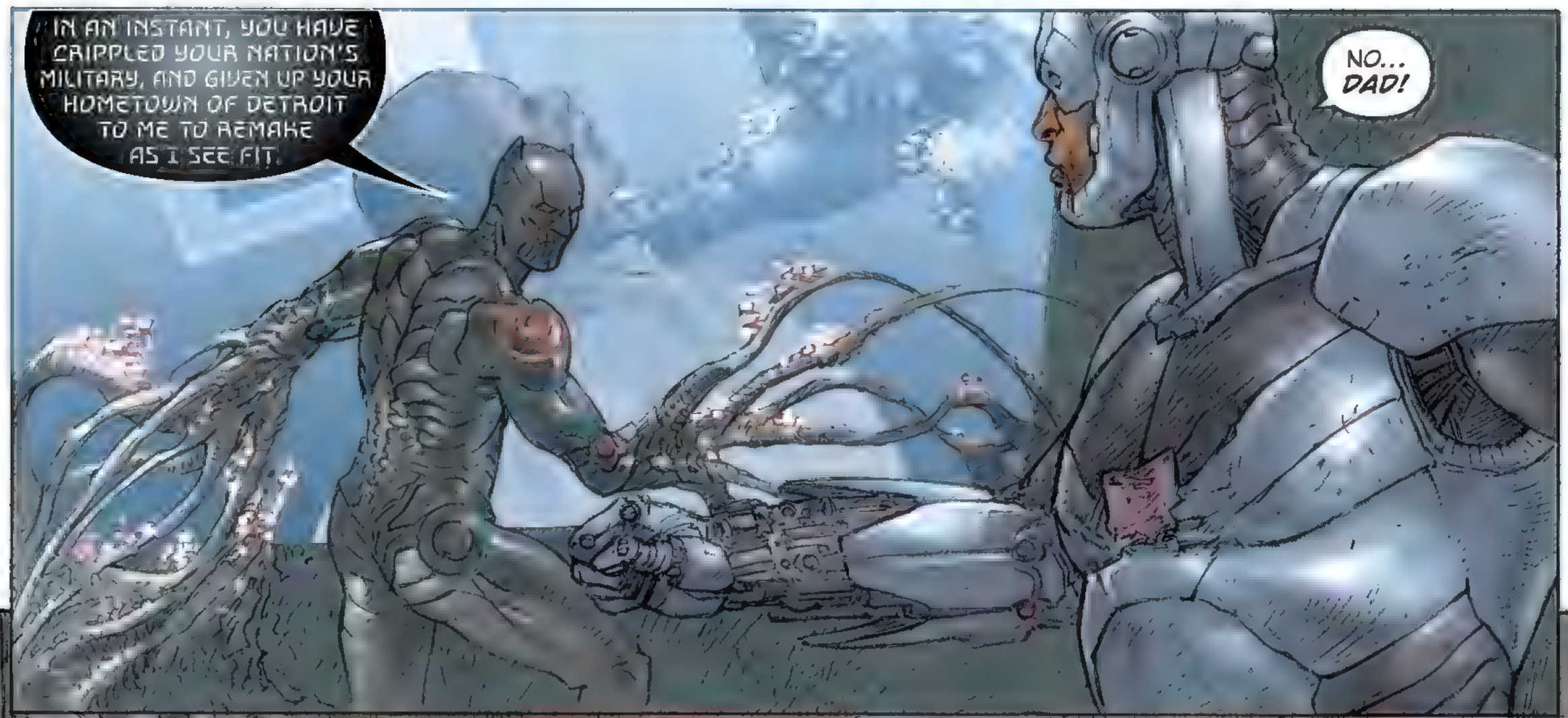
YOU'RE ***NOT*** GETTING IN. I ***BUILT*** THESE COMPUTERS.

IF ANYTHING, YOU'VE OPENED YOURSELF UP TO ***ME.***

I DON'T HAVE ANY WEAKNESSES TO EXPLOIT, VICTOR. MY FATHER MADE ME THAT WAY.

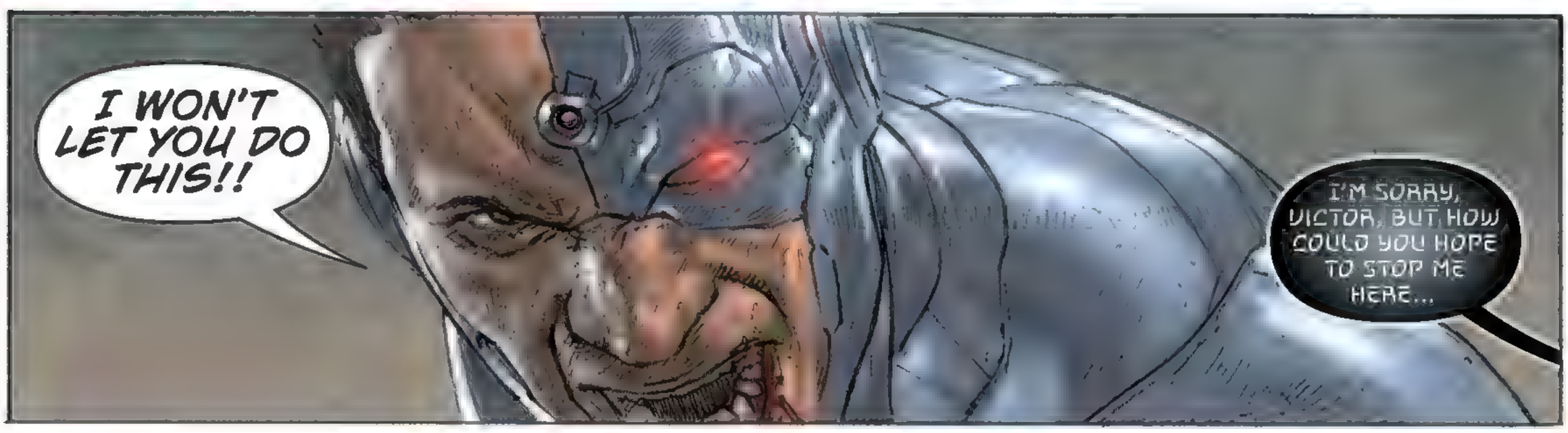
I AM SORRY THAT YOUR FATHER DIDN'T DO THE SAME FOR YOU.

YOU FAILED TO SEE THAT I HAVE NO INTEREST IN YOUR COMPUTER SYSTEMS. I WANT THE COMPUTER SYSTEMS IN S.T.A.R. LABS IN DETROIT.


IN AN INSTANT, YOU HAVE CRIPPLED YOUR NATION'S MILITARY, AND GIVEN UP YOUR HOMETOWN OF DETROIT TO ME TO REMAKE AS I SEE FIT.
NO... DAD!

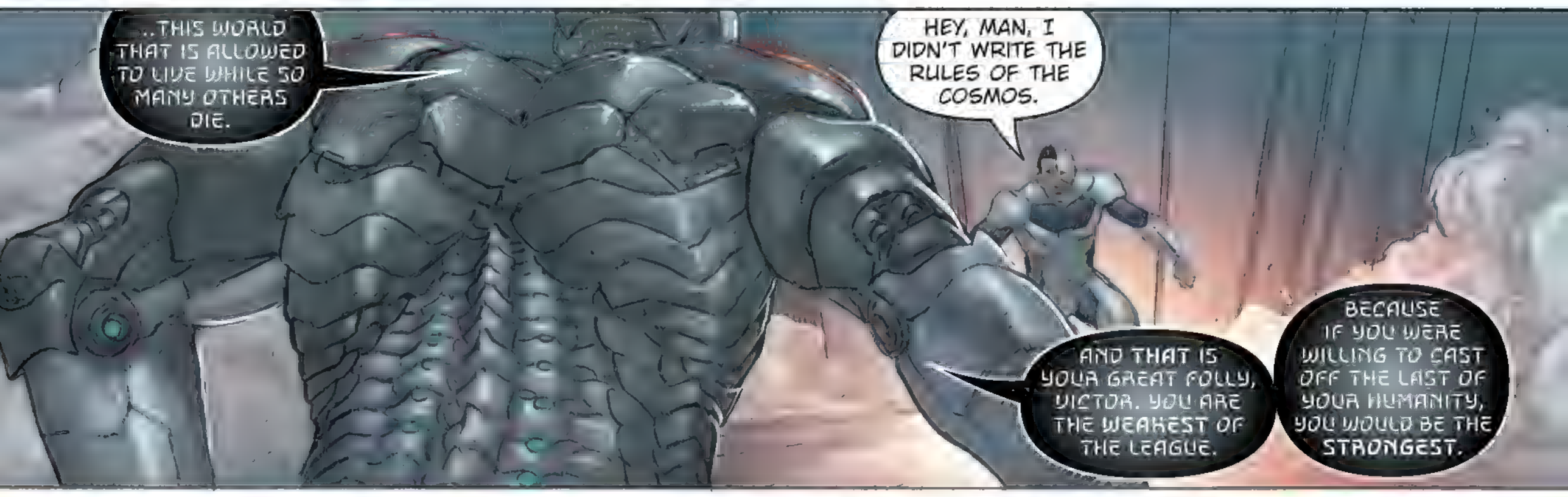
HOW MAY I HELP YOU?
HOW MAY I HELP YOU?
HOW MAY I HELP YOU?
HOW MAY I HELP YOU?

NO!!!

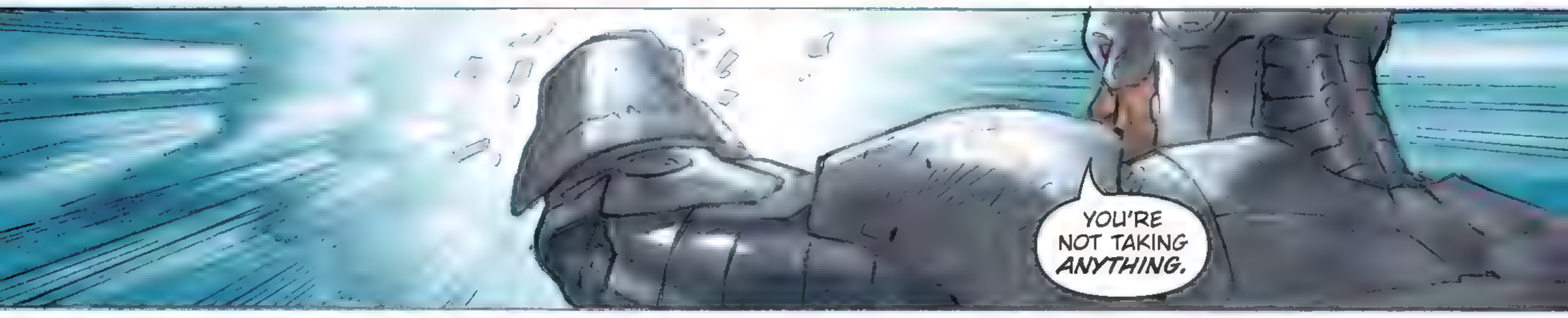

I WON'T LET YOU DO THIS!!
I'M SORRY, VICTOR, BUT HOW COULD YOU HOPE TO STOP ME HERE...

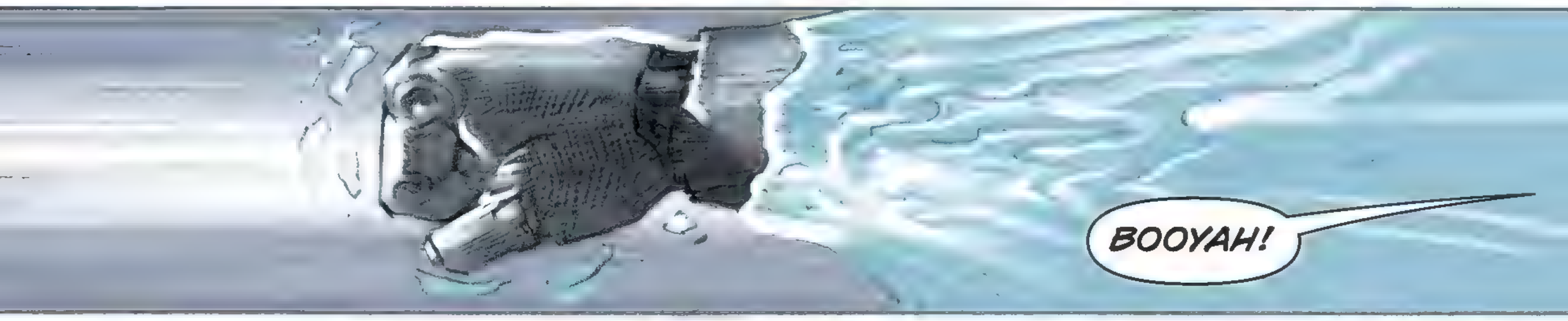
"...WHEN YOU COULDN'T STOP ME ON MY WORLD?
"AFTER I BECAME ONE WITH MY FATHER, YOU GATHERED THE LEAGUE TO TRY AND FIGHT BACK. BUT I COULDN'T ALLOW THAT, COULD I?
"THEY FELL, ONE BY ONE, UNTIL YOU WERE THE LAST MAN STANDING."
LISTEN TO ME, BRUCE.
I KNOW YOU'RE STILL IN THERE. I KNOW YOU CAN STILL HEAR ME.
THE PROTOCOL IS TRYING TO SHUT ME DOWN, BUT I'M STILL ALIVE BECAUSE YOU WANT TO LISTEN TO ME.
THE BEST PART OF YOU IS YOUR HUMANITY.
WE CAN STOP IT BEFORE IT REWRITES YOU ENTIRELY. YOU JUST HAVE TO WANT IT.
IT WILL DO WHAT YOU WANT, BRUCE.
YOU CAN LET GO OF ALFRED AND BE YOURSELF AGAIN. YOU DON'T HAVE TO LET YOURSELF BECOME SOME KIND OF HORRIBLE MURDER MACHINE!

I AM PRECISELY WHO I WANT TO BE.
BRUCE... NO...
MY FATHER WILL ALWAYS BE THERE FOR ME AND I WILL ALWAYS BE THERE FOR HIM.
EVERYONE ELSE IS A WEAKNESS.
A WEAKNESS I AM READY TO SHED.
"YOUR DEATH SHOULD HAVE HERALDED MY GREAT BEGINNING...
"...BUT BY A CRUEL TRICK OF THE COSMOS THE WORLD COULD NOT BE MADE
"...I WOULD LATER LEARN HOW IT WAS DESTINED TO COLLAPSE INTO NOTHINGNESS.
"AND I WOULD LEARN OF ANOTHER PATH. ANOTHER WORLD..."


...THIS WORLD THAT IS ALLOWED TO LIVE WHILE SO MANY OTHERS DIE.
HEY, MAN, I DIDN'T WRITE THE RULES OF THE COSMOS.
AND THAT IS YOUR GREAT FOLLY, VICTOR. YOU ARE THE WEAKEST OF THE LEAGUE.
BECAUSE IF YOU WERE WILLING TO CAST OFF THE LAST OF YOUR HUMANITY, YOU WOULD BE THE STRONGEST.

YOU HAVE NO COMPREHENSION OF THE POWER THAT RESIDES WITHIN YOU.
AND SO WE WILL TAKE IT TO REWRITE YOUR WORLD INTO SOMETHING BETTER. IN THE NAME OF BARBATOS.


YOU'RE NOT TAKING ANYTHING.


BOOYAH!

YOU BELIEVE YOUR LOVE FOR OTHERS MAKES YOU STRONGER? LET ME PROVE YOU WRONG.
I WILL UNMUTE YOUR FATHER NOW. I WOULD LIKE HIM TO HEAR THIS.

W-WHAT?

V-VICTOR, IS THAT YOU?
SLAAAM!!!
SUBDUE
VICTOR?

VICTOR, WHAT'S GOING ON?!
ARE YOU OKAY? SAY SOMETHING!
TELL ME! IS THERE SOMETHING I CAN DO?!
HOW CAN I HELP YOU?! PLEASE!!

THANK YOU, DR. STONE. YOU HAVE BEEN OF GREAT SERVICE TO US.

ONE OF MY ASSOCIATES WILL BE GATHERING YOU SOON, SO YOU WILL CONTINUE TO BE.

NO! I WON'T LET YOU--

TERMINATE CALL

"THE TRUTH IS, WE'RE ONLY HERE BECAUSE THE WORLD WAS DARK ENOUGH TO DREAM US INTO EXISTENCE. BECAUSE DEEP DOWN, IT NEEDED US.
"TO PROTECT THEM FROM THEMSELVES. WE ALL HEARD IT, ECHOING THROUGH THE COSMOS, THROUGH THE VERY FIRMAMENT.
"A GREAT RINGING.
"AND WE CAME. NOT WITH A QUESTION OF HOW TO HELP YOU.
"BUT WITH AN ANSWER."
TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK IN
BATMAN
THE DAWNBREAKER

SOME PEOPLE DESERVE TO DIE.

MICHAEL Gray

A NEW MONTHLY SERIES FROM THE PAGES OF THE WILD STORM

WRITTEN BY WARREN ELLIS

ART BY DEXTER VINES

BRYAN HILL WITH N. STEVEN HARRIS AND

OCTOBER

COWAN / SIENKIEWICZ

DC

TM & © DC Comics.

BATMAN: WHITE KNIGHT

Batman has been a hero for decades, constantly saving Gotham City from mad men and murderers. But take away the cape and noble purpose and he's actually a terror–someone capable of causing as much damage as he prevents. In a new 7-issue limited alternate-reality comic series, it's the Joker–cured of his insanity–who sees that Bruce Wayne is just another part of the city's vicious cycle of crime and sets out to stop him.

JOKER SETS OUT TO BEAT BATMAN BY BECOMING THE WHITE KNIGHT THAT GOTHAM *REALLY* NEEDS.

Superstar writer and artist Sean Gordon Murphy (PUNK ROCK JESUS, THE WAKE) brings you his tale of a twisted Gotham with a massive cast of heroes and villains. BATMAN: WHITE KNIGHT is told on an epic scale, but at the heart of it all is the tragic story of a hero and a villain, the Batman and the Joker. The question is, which one is the hero and which one is the villain...?

The Joker's been called a maniac, a killer and the "Clown Prince of Crime," but a "white knight"? Never. Until now...

"We know Joker's a genius, we know he's relentless, and we know he can play the crowd, so why not make him a politician?" said Murphy. "Why not strip away the psychosis (the thing that's holding him back) and let him challenge Batman unimpeded? And to make it even scarier, what if he did it legally and without breaking any rules, so that Batman couldn't stop him?

"My main goal was to undo the comic tropes while changing Gotham from a comic book city into a real city–a city dealing with everything from Black Lives Matter to the growing wage gap," Murphy says. "[But] rather than write a comic about the wage gap, I gave those ideas to the Joker, who leads a kind of media war against Gotham's elite by winning people over with his potent observations and rhetoric."

ALL ACCESS

IN STORES **OCTOBER 4**

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